Electronic Visa Application Form (EVAF)

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- In September 2003, Consular Affairs introduced a web-based non-immigrant visa (NIV) application form that can be used in lieu of the DS-156 and DS-156 paper application form. This form, called the Electronic Visa Application Form or EVAF, allows applicants to fill out the NIV application online, print it out, and bring it to the consular section or other data entry point. The EVAF prints out with a barcode which consular sections can read in order to enter the applicant's information into the State Department's visa database.

- The EVAF process allows applicants to fill out their application from any internet-connected computer. The format and the questions are identical to the paper version of the NIV application form.

- The EVAF makes the NIV application process more efficient. It saves data entry time in the consular section, and reduces data entry errors.

- The EVAF can be found at http://evisaforms.state.gov/, and is available in English, Spanish, Polish, Korean, Japanese, French, German, and Portuguese.

- EVAF has been designed to keep your application data safe and secure. Its security and privacy has been proven through millions of applications.

WORLDWIDE USE OF EVAF

- Since the introduction of the Electronic Visa Application Form in September 2003, more and more posts have been making use of this time-saving tool. In fact, just three years after the EVAF was introduced, very few posts are still doing on-site NIV data entry, and over 50 percent of all NIV applicants use the EVAF. At 44 posts, over 80 percent of NIV applications are done through EVAF, in places from Tashkent to La Paz to Beijing, with posts as varied as Bern, Kingston, and Tokyo regularly topping the 90 percent mark.

- Most other posts that do not use the EVAF outsource their data entry and download it through a remote data entry program. Posts in India, Cuba, Senegal and others process over 95 percent of their applications this way.

MANDATORY EVAF AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2006

- As of November 1st, all applicants worldwide who wish to apply for tourist, student, or other non-immigrant visas to the United States must complete the visa application form on the internet using the Electronic Visa Application Form, or EVAF. Applicants who apply using a third-party contractor for remote data entry, and truly emergency cases, are exempt from this requirement.

- Beginning November 1ˢᵗ, applications submitted with a handwritten or typewriter typed DS-156 visa application form can no longer be accepted. Applicants who submit a handwritten or typewriter typed DS-156 application forms will be asked to complete and print out the new EVAF application form, which is available online at http://evisaforms.state.gov. Visa application forms printed from the internet and then filled out will not be accepted. The forms must be completed online and then printed.

PRESS Q&As

Q: Why is the State Department requiring the EVAF?
A: When applicants use the EVAF, they help our consular posts improve the visa services we provide our customers. The EVAF, which has been online for more than three years, allows for quicker and more accurate data entry. Our customers do not have to wait for us to enter the data, and therefore can have their interviews and receive their visas more quickly.

Q: Doesn't this process disadvantage those applicants in developing countries?
A: We do not believe that this is the case. In fact, many developing countries have high numbers of Diversity Visa (DV) Lottery applicants – all of whom have had to apply online since 2003. Despite this requirement, the countries with the highest number of DV entries continue to be from countries as diverse as Bangladesh, Ghana, Nepal, and Ukraine. We believe the same thing will happen with the new NIV requirement – legitimate travelers will still be able to apply. In fact, the electronic form should make the process easier for many applicants who no longer need to travel to the consular section to pick up a visa form.

Q: The EVAF is not available in my local language/The EVAF requires me to type in English. How can I use it?
A: Our visa system requires the information is entered in English with Roman characters, so the EVAF entries must be in English. If you have questions, contact the Embassy or Consulate nearest you. They may be able to provide local language translations of the EVAF for you to use when filling it out. Call the consular section or visit the website at [post's website or www.travel.state.gov] for more information.

Q: The consular section in my country requires me to go to a bank/courier service/contractor with my application form. That company sends my form to the consular section. Do I need to use EVAF?
A: Not necessarily. If your country's consular section allows remote data entry, you may still submit your application in that manner. Whether you will need to fill out the EVAF form yourself will depend on the arrangements that made regarding remote data entry in your country. Call the consular section or visit the website at [post's website or www.travel.state.gov] for more information.

Q: I have to travel for an emergency reason. Do I need to fill out the EVAF?
A: In most cases, you will still need to fill out the EVAF. Call the consular section or visit the website at [post's website or www.travel.state.gov] for more information.

Q: I am a diplomat/government official. Do I need to fill out the EVAF?
A: All applicants, including diplomats and government officials, need to use the EVAF or remote data entry procedure except in case of emergency travel. Call the consular section or visit the website at www.travel.state.gov [or post's website] for more information.

Q: I don't have Internet access at home. May I come into the consulate and fill out my form there?
A: Unfortunately, most of our posts do not have public Internet access available; however, you are free to use any public access Internet available. Contact the consular section for suggestions on where you may go to fill out your form.